

Message Text

SECRET

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T STATE 013687

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT LONDON 476 ACTION SECSTATE 12 JAN

QUOTE

S E C R E T LONDON 00476

EXDIS

FOR NEA ASST. SECRETARY ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR MARR MU UK
SUBJ: USE OF MASIRAH OR TAMRID (MIDWAY) AIRFIELDS

1. DURING FLIGHT ON SULTAN'S AIRCRAFT BACK TO LONDON
ADVISER FAHYA OMAR ASKED EMBOFF LAMBRAKIS TO CHECK WITH
DEPARTMENT AS TO WHICH AIRFIELD, MASIRAH
OR TAMRID (MIDWAY), USG PREFERRED TO
USE, IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSION DURING SULTAN'S VISIT
TO WASHINGTON. OMAR SAID HE HAD PLANNED TO TELEPHONE
DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENTS ON THIS MATTER (AS HE HAD
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UNDERSTOOD SECRETARY KISSINGER TO SUGGEST DURING BLAIR

HOUSE MEETING JUST PRIOR TO DEPARTURE) BUT ON REFLECTION
PREFERRED TO USE OUR MORE SECURE CHANNEL.

2. OMAR SAID OMANIS GOT IMPRESSION THAT U.S. MIGHT HAVE
PREFERENCE FOR TAMRID (MIDWAY) NOW THAT SULTAN HAS
OFFERED IT. SULTAN IS PREPARED TO LET US USE EITHER OR
BOTH. HOWEVER, HE AND OTHER OMANI OFFICIALS THOUGHT
TAMRID (MIDWAY) MIGHT BE BETTER AS U.S. COULD POOL
AIRCRAFT SUPPORT THERE WITH IRANIAN AIRCRAFT (COMMENT:
OMAR MENTIONED IRANIAN PHANTOMS, THOUGH HE MAY HAVE MADE
MISTAKE). HE SAID AIR STRIP THERE IS SUFFICIENTLY
LONG AND FUEL STORAGE FACILITIES EXIST. OMANI GOVERNMENT
WOULD BE HAPPY TO ADD ANY ADDITIONAL FACILITIES USG
MIGHT REQUIRE. HE THOUGHT IRANIANS WOULD BENEFIT
FROM SUCH PROPRIETY TO U.S. OPERATION. SINCE BRITISH
PERSONNEL OF SULTAN'S AIR FORCE THERE ARE UNDER
OMANI AUTHORITY, QUESTION OF OBTAINING HMG CONCURRENCE
WOULD NOT ARISE - AS IT WOULD WITH MASIRAH.

3. ON OTHER HAND, IF USG PREFERRED MASIRAH, OMANIS WOULD
LIKE TO KNOW SOON SO THAT FOREIGN MINISTER ZAWAWI MIGHT BE
INSTRUCTED TO TELL BRITISH THAT SULTAN HAS GIVEN PERMISSION
FOR USG USE AND RAF SHOULD ACCOMMODATE US. (OMAR GAVE
LAMBRAKIS HIS PHILOSOPHY, WHICH HE SAID HAS BEEN
COMMUNICATED IN PAST TO THE BRITISH, THAT MASIRAH IS
OMANI TERRITORY AND THIS UNDER SULTAN'S SOVEREIGN
AUTHORITY NO MATTER WHAT LEASE ARRANGEMENTS MAY HAVE BEEN
MADE WITH THE BRITISH).

4. OMAR SAID HE IS PRESIDING OVER MEETING OF OMANI
"MILITARY CHIEFS" (HE WAS NOT MORE SPECIFIC) ON
JANUARY 16 IN LONDON AND WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO BRIEF
THEM AND WORK OUT FURTHER ARRANGEMENTS WITH THEM BY
THEN. (WE SUPPOSE THIS IS MEETING WITH BRITISH OFFICERS
COMMANDING SULTAN'S FORCES).

5. LAMBRAKIS LATER CHECKED WITH ZAWAWI, WHO CONFIRMED
OMAR'S REQUEST IN ITS ENTIRETY. ZAWAWI PLANS TO RETURN
TO OMAN IN ABOUT 4-5 DAYS.

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6. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY REPLY TO
OMAR'S QUERY (WHICH HE ASKED BE PASSED TO HIM HERE
DIRECTLY). IT OCCURRED TO US YOU WOULD WISH TO TAKE ABOVE
INTO CONSIDERATION IN BRIEFING THE BRITISH.
SPIZRS UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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